

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

By this amendment, claims 1 and 2 are amended. Claim 1 was amended to include subject matter from claims 2 and 4. Claim 4 is cancelled without prejudice. Further, claim 2 is amended in response to the amendment of claim 1, and claim 5 is amended to depend from claim 1. No new matter is introduced. According to paragraph 3 of the Office Action, claims 11 and 12 are drawn to allowable subject matter. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested for the currently pending claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-10 and 13-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hsiao (USP 6,460,443). The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections for the following reasons.

Hsiao fails to disclose or suggest any elastic member interfacing between a knob and a sliding member for returning the knob to an initial position when there is no external force exerted, as recited in claims 1, 13 and 17 of the present application. The elements associated with Hsiao's seat 30, which is cited by the Examiner to anticipate the sliding member, cutting member and adjusting member of the present invention, actually include a protrusion 301, circular cutter blade 33, fastener or pivot pin 303, cover 304 and inverted U-shaped cap 307 (Fig. 5; col. 2, lines 30-42). The protrusion 301 can be considered equivalent to the sliding member of the present invention, and the cutter blade 33 can be considered equivalent to the cutting member of the present invention. No adjusting member of the present invention, however, is disclosed or suggested. Accordingly, the present invention as recited in claims 1, 13 and 17 and their dependent claims 2-3, 5-12, 14-16 and 18-20, is not anticipated by Hsiao. Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection under Section 102(b).

Based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of all pending claims 1-3 and 5-20. Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that may be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned.

Appl. No. 10/705,616
Amdt. dated January 3, 2005
Reply to Office Action of October 5, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. R. Witt", written over a horizontal line.

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